

Senators out of 100 voted for it, we did not get the magic number—60—and the DREAM Act did not become law.

Senator REID joined me, with 22 other Democratic Senators, asking President Obama to create this DACA Program so these children could sign up. The President did. It is an amazing success. What has happened to these DREAMers when they are given a chance to have a future in America, when they are not afraid of the knock on the door and being deported? Well, what has happened? Amazing things have happened. They are beginning to contribute to America as engineers, teachers, small business owners, and more.

I know this policy of the President to give these young people a chance to be part of America absolutely infuriates most of my Republican colleagues. They cannot stand the thought that the President by Executive order would give these young people a chance. In fact, the House of Representatives on several occasions has tried to reverse this and take away this recognition that these young people can stay here on a temporary basis without being deported.

Last fall, the President extended the program in what is known as DAPA—deferred action for parental accountability—for those who have been here for a long period of time and would also be given temporary status, registered with the government, and be able to work in our country.

Today, the Center for American Progress released a new report on the impact on the economy of the United States of these people eligible for DACA, the young people, and DAPA, their parents. Over the next 10 years, in my home State of Illinois, these two Presidential policies will increase my State's gross domestic product by almost \$15 billion, and it will increase the overall earnings of the people living in my State.

How is that possible? How is it possible to take these undocumented people and turn them into a positive for the economy? Well, I will tell you, that is what happens when they are on the books and working and paying their taxes, as they want to be, as they should be.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN of Arizona was just on the floor. He was one of four Republican Senators—it took some courage—who stepped up and worked with four of us on the Democratic side to write a comprehensive immigration bill. We believe that our immigration system is broken in America, and we want to fix it. We met together for months working on that bill. One of the good reports that came out of the bill was that a comprehensive immigration system where people register, submit themselves to a background check, and pay their taxes has a positive impact on the economy of the United States.

Unfortunately, the expansion of these two programs has been blocked by a lawsuit in Texas filed against the President. Earlier this month, Repub-

licans in the House of Representatives voted to block the administration from any money to defend this lawsuit. That amendment was offered by a Republican Congressman from Iowa named STEVE KING, who has falsely claimed that DREAMers are actually drug dealers with “calves the size of cantaloupes”—a direct quote from Congressman KING—because they are carrying drugs across our border. That is a cruel game Congressman KING is playing with the lives of these young people. And now they want to fix the game by blocking the Obama administration from defending the lawsuit. Clearly, the proponents of this lawsuit and their destructive efforts will ultimately fail. But the Supreme Court has been clear—the President has the power to make these policies.

It is so troubling that so many on the other side of the aisle are determined to block immigration in America.

I have come to the floor many times to tell the stories of these DREAMers, and I would like to tell one of those stories today on the third anniversary of this DACA Program.

As shown in picture, this is Denisse Rojas. In 1990, when she was just a little infant, her parents carried her across the southwest border with the hope of giving her and her siblings a better life. Denisse and her family settled in Fremont, CA. Denisse said: “In grade school, I recall feeling different from my peers. . . . my skin color was darker, my English was stilted, I was poor, and I was undocumented.”

Denisse remembers her dad in a restaurant uniform studying late at night so he could pass the GED test. And her mother attended community college part time for 7 years to earn a nursing degree. It was this perseverance that inspired Denisse to try harder.

In high school she was an excellent student and athlete. She graduated with a 4.3 grade point average, and she received the U.S. Army Reserve National Scholar Athlete Award.

Denisse was accepted to the University of California, Berkeley—one of the best colleges in the country—but because of her undocumented status, she did not qualify for any financial aid or government help. Denisse worked 30 hours a week while attending school full time, and she commuted an hour each way to and from school every day so she could live in affordable housing.

At Berkeley, Denisse Rojas majored in integrative biology and sociology. Because she was such a good student, she was selected to work in the genetics lab. Her research was published in the journal Science.

I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes. I know the Senator is anxious, but if I could have 2 minutes.

Mr. MCCAIN. Will the Senator allow me to propound a unanimous consent request?

Mr. DURBIN. Of course.

I am sorry, the staff said we have one more thing to check. If you will give me 2 minutes.

Mr. MCCAIN. Please proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I would have gladly yielded to my friend from Arizona but a higher order prevails.

As a senior at Berkeley, Denisse co-founded Pre-Health Dreamers, a national organization of undocumented students who want to become health care professionals.

She volunteers at the San Francisco General Hospital Community to Clinic Linkage Program, where she helps patients who are seeking affordable housing, healthy food, and employment.

In 2012, when President Obama established DACA—its third anniversary today—her life changed. As a DACA recipient, Denisse's dreams finally seemed within reach.

In this picture I have in the Chamber, Denisse is holding her letter of acceptance to Mount Sinai Medical School in New York. She will be in classes this fall. She wrote me a letter. She said:

I have pledged allegiance to this nation's values since my first day of school; I consider the United States my home. Furthermore, serving others has instilled in me the notion that everyone deserves the opportunity for prosperity. I thus aim to dedicate my life to serving others as a physician and continuing to be a voice for immigrants.

Would America be a better country if she were deported? Would we be better as a nation if Denisse Rojas was told: Leave. We don't need you. We don't want you. The fact that you have spent your entire life here means nothing. The fact that you are an exceptional student means nothing. Leave.

It sounds like a harsh point of view, but it is shared by many in Congress.

This last weekend, I took my two little grandkids—my wife and I did—out to the Statue of Liberty on Ellis Island. I took a look at that statue and was reminded that we are a nation of immigrants. I was blessed that my mother came to this country as an immigrant, and I stand on the Senate floor trying to do my best to make it a better country.

There are people like Denisse Rojas who want to make this a better America. DACA has given them that chance. Today, we celebrate the third anniversary of this Executive order, but more importantly, we celebrate who we are—a nation of immigrants always striving to make life better for the next generation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and thank my colleague from Arizona.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO THE SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to express my appreciation to the Senator from Illinois for his passion, for his commitment, for his advocacy for people who sometimes do not have

a voice here in the U.S. Senate. I congratulate him, and I express my heartfelt appreciation for his efforts on behalf of people who are unable to speak for themselves. I thank the Senator from Illinois.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow, June 16, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the Senate vote in relation to the McCain-Feinstein amendment No. 1889, with no second-degree amendments in order to the McCain-Feinstein amendment prior to the vote; further, that at 2:15 p.m., the Senate vote in relation to the Ernst amendment No. 1549, followed by a vote on the Gillibrand amendment No. 1578, as under the previous order, followed by the cloture vote with respect to the McCain substitute amendment No. 1463.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask to modify that unanimous consent request by adding further that no second-degree amendments be in order to the Ernst or Gillibrand amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO IRAQI KURDISH PESHMERGA FORCES

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, as we continue to fight against ISIS and their radical allies, I rise to urge my colleagues to support the Ernst-Boxer amendment, which provides authority for direct assistance to a critical partner in that fight: the Iraqi Kurds.

Defeating ISIS is critical to maintaining an inclusive and unified Iraq, and the Iraqi Kurds are the key to that goal and helping to improve the humanitarian crisis in the region through their support and protection of over 1.6 million displaced persons from Iraq and Syria.

This bipartisan amendment, also cosponsored by Senators GRAHAM, TILLIS, RUBIO, and GARDNER, provides temporary authority for the President, in consultation with the Iraqi Government—and I say, again, in consultation with the Iraqi Government—to provide weapons directly to Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces in the fight against ISIS should the administration choose to do so.

Currently, by law, the United States must provide support to the Iraqi

Kurds through the Iraqi central government in Baghdad, which has often not been timely or adequate in the past. These delays have had a negative impact on the Kurds' ability to defend Iraqi territory and provide security for those who have sought refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan. The President's recent decision to expedite arms to the Kurds as a way to improve the counter-ISIS effort, I believe, speaks for itself.

Additionally, last year, Secretary of State John Kerry said to the House Foreign Affairs Committee:

You said the administration is responsible for sending all these weapons through Baghdad. No, we're not. You are. We're adhering to U.S. law passed by Congress.

Secretary Kerry continued:

We have to send it to the [Iraqi] government because that's U.S. law. If you want to change it, fix it, we invite you.

Well, this amendment does just that, and it does so in a bipartisan, bicameral fashion. It builds upon a similar bill in the House led by Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL. This bill and my amendment are quite different than the House NDAA language.

My amendment provides a 3-year authorization to reduce delays and inefficiencies in arming Peshmerga forces to fight ISIS while ensuring the Iraqi Government is an integral part of the process. The amendment continues to promote a unified Iraq and enhances the ability to fight our common enemy—an enemy that ultimately seeks to bring their terror to our shores.

Furthermore, the amendment preserves the President's ability to notify the Iraqi Government before weapons, equipment, defense services or related training is provided to Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces. It ensures this emergency authorization does not construct a precedent of providing direct support to organizations other than a country or an international organization. Most important to remember, it does not require the President to act. It provides him the authorization to do so if he feels the situation warrants it.

Beginning in the first gulf war, the Iraqi Kurds and their Peshmerga security forces have played a vital role in supporting U.S. interests and fostering a free Iraq, despite limited means of doing so. Last week, they not only held their ground but made some gains against ISIS in the Kirkuk Province. There are far too few positive news stories out of Iraq recently, but when there are some, it is often the Kurds who are making that progress.

ISIS is deadly and determined, and Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces—our critical partner in the fight against ISIS—need U.S. weapons as quickly as possible. We simply cannot afford future delays at this critical moment in the battle. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this much needed bipartisan legislation to arm the Iraqi Kurds in the fight against ISIS.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICA'S SPACE PROGRAM

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I wish to address the issue of America's space program.

Some very disturbing news has come out over the course of the Appropriations Committee's deliberations on the House-passed Commerce-State-Justice appropriations bill, which, it is my understanding, has passed the House. It includes the funding for NASA. What is disturbing about it is that at a time when we are recognizing that Vladimir Putin is increasingly trying to thwart the interests of the United States with his aggressiveness and invasion of Ukraine, his threats to the Baltic States, his invasion of that part of Ukraine known as Crimea, and the various other semi-threats he has made to us, it would certainly seem to be in the interests of the United States that where we have a joint shared and mutually agreed-to space program which goes all the way back to 1975 when in the middle of the Cold War an American spacecraft rendezvoused and docked with a Russian spacecraft, Soyuz—and the Apollo-Soyuz mission made extraordinary political as well as scientific history for those two crews, led by Gen. Tom Stafford on the American side and General Alexei Leonov on the Soviet side. After they docked, those two crews lived together in space for 9 days in the middle of the Cold War, 1975. That set us on the course—with the Soviet Union still in existence—of starting to cooperate. We actually had an American space shuttle rendezvous and dock with the first Russian space station, MIR. From there, we went on to build the International Space Station with the Russians as well as a dozen other nations as our partners. This space station, on orbit 250 to 325 miles high, is 120 yards long. In other words, if you sat at the 50-yard line in a football stadium, you would look from one goalpost to the other goalpost and that is how big this is, the International Space Station. There are six human beings up there. There is an international crew. There are Russians, there are Americans, and from time to time there are Italians, Germans, French, Japanese—a whole host of nations that are our partners.

So it has been that as we built this space station, the Russians would launch on their Soyuz spacecraft, to and from the International Space Station, supply and human supply, and the Americans, who had the capacity of 45,000 pounds on the space shuttle,